



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/064,244	06/25/2002	Jeffrey Lee Thompson	24-NS-06054	8427

23465 7590 08/15/2003

JOHN S. BEULICK
C/O ARMSTRONG TEASDALE, LLP
ONE METROPOLITAN SQUARE
SUITE 2600
ST LOUIS, MO 63102-2740

EXAMINER

BOCHNA, DAVID

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3679

DATE MAILED: 08/15/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application N .

10/064,244

Applicant(s)

THOMPSON, JEFFREY LEE

Examiner

David E. Bochna

Art Unit

3679

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 June 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5, 6 and 12-20 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 7-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) 4 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claim 4 is objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 4, line 3, it is unclear if “a bolt bore spherical seat” is the same structural limitation referred to as “a bolt bore seat” in line 18 of claim 1. Therefore “a bolt bore seat” should be changed to “said bolt bore seat” in order to keep the proper antecedent basis.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 7-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Chaix et al.

In regard to claim 7, Chaix et al. discloses (fig. 1) a coupling spring ring 40 for coupling a first pipe section flange to a second pipe section flange, each flange comprising at least one notch 14, the spring ring comprising:

a body 40 having a first surface (bottom surface of 40) and an opposing second surface (top surface of 40), the body 40 comprising a main bore (interior bore of 16) and a plurality of bolt bores 44 extending therethrough, the main bore configured to receive a pipe section 4 therethrough, the bolt bore configured to receive a fastener 48 therethrough;

a plurality of pivot bearings 42 extending from the first surface (portions 30 of 42 extend

Art Unit: 3679

from the first surface), each pivot bearing configured to engage a pipe section flange notch 14; and a plurality of bolt bores seats 56 located in the second surface and coaxially aligned with the bolt bores 44.

In regard to claim 8, the spring ring 40 is substantially cylindrical.

In regard to claim 9, the plurality of pivot bearings 42 are equally spaced circumferentially around the spring ring first surface.

In regard to claim 10, the plurality of bolt bore seats 56 are substantially spherical.

In regard to claim 11, further comprising a bolt 48 extending through each bolt bore, each bolt comprising at least one spherical bearing 56 sized to mate with a bolt bore seat.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 1-3, 5-6 and 12-20 are allowed.
5. Claim 4 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the claim objection, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed 6/24/03 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that Chaix et al. does not describe nor suggest a body that includes a main bore and a plurality of bolt bores and a plurality of pivot bearings. However, it is the Examiner's contention that Chaix et al. discloses all of these structural limitations, as described in detail above.

Chaix et al. discloses a main bore (inner bore of 40 in which pipe 2, 4, 6 or 8 is placed). Chaix et al. also discloses a plurality of bolt holes 44 within the body 40 and a plurality of pivot bearings 42, also in the body 40.

Conclusion

7. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David E. Bochna whose telephone number is (703) 306-9040. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-5:30 Monday-Thursday and every other Friday.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lynne H. Browne can be reached on (703) 308-1159. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9326 for regular communications and (703) 872-9327 for After Final communications.

Application/Control Number: 10/064,244

Page 5

Art Unit: 3679

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-2168.


David Bochna
August 13, 2003